



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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DRYOPTERIS CRISTATA

BUCKLER FERN

Buckler Fern is a perennial with clustered fronds arising from a short rhizome. The fronds have narrowly elliptic blades pinnately divided into numerous pairs of pinnately lobed leaflets. The fertile fronds, 3-6 dm long, are erect and deciduous, while the sterile ones are evergreen, smaller, and more lax. Clusters of spores, or sori are borne along either side of the pinnae midveins on the underside of fertile fronds, covered by the whitish, broadly horseshoe-shaped indusium. Mature fronds in July-August, spores in early July.

The broadly horseshoe-shaped indusium identifies this species as a *DRYOPTERIS*. Other members of the genus in our area have more highly divided leaves and sterile and fertile fronds that are similar to each other.